



Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center

Background

Congress established **DVBIC** in 1992 to integrate specialized traumatic brain injury care, research and education across the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. A component center of the **Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury**, DVBIC is composed of a network of 17 sites located at military treatment facilities, VA Rehabilitation Centers and two civilian sites with headquarters based at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

Mission

DVBIC assists the DoD and VA in optimizing the care of servicemembers and veterans who have sustained a TBI in deployed and non-deployed settings through state-of-the-art clinical care, innovative research, care coordination and educational programs, tools and resources. For more information, visit www.DVBIC.org.

Any servicemember or veteran with a TBI may use DVBIC's services. DVBIC accepts self-referrals as well as referrals from family members and health care providers. It has 17 regional locations, which can be found on an [interactive map](#), to determine the appropriate site for patient referral. Contact DVBIC at info@DVBIC.org or 800-870-9244.

Clinical Care

DVBIC clinicians and researchers coordinate with subject matter experts from DoD, VA, federal agencies and academia to develop clinical practice guidelines and evidence-based approaches, focusing on the continuum of care from point of injury through return to duty, work or community.

DVBIC's network of interdisciplinary health care providers ensures that TBI patients receive appropriate screening, treatment and follow-up care. Utilizing the latest technology and evidence-based clinical standards, DVBIC takes a comprehensive approach by addressing patients' health, abilities and aspirations.

DVBIC's clinical care services include:

- **Tele-TBI Clinic and Remote Assessment Center**—Offers TBI screening, assessment, consultation and care to patients at remote military medical centers and troop intensive sites. Health care providers from multiple specialties (e.g., neurology, pain management and rehabilitation) address patients' unique needs using interactive video-teleconferencing.
- **Regional Care Coordination**—Connects servicemembers who have sustained a TBI during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) or Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) to health care and resources. The program also assists servicemembers to transition from DoD to VA and civilian life.
- **TBI.consult@us.army.mil**—Provides expert consultation for health care providers in-theater. Specialists advise providers on TBI screening, symptom management, return-to-duty considerations, medication and other areas where neurological and psychological health concerns overlap.
- **Neurocognitive Assessment Tool (NCAT)**—Provides cognitive performance baselines to compare with cognitive test scores obtained after an injury, which enhances assessment of servicemembers following a concussion. As of September 30, 2010, NCAT tests have been administered to nearly 700,000 servicemembers and there is evidence of increased use in-theater following an injury. The network implementation of NCAT with integration into the medical record system is scheduled to launch in the first half of 2011. DVBIC is the office of responsibility for this program.

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www.dvbic.org

Education

DVBIC offers educational programs, materials and training for health care providers, military line leaders, servicemembers, veterans, families and civilian communities on awareness, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of TBI.

DVBIC's program of education includes:

- Patient and Provider Education Products—In 2009, DVBIC disseminated over 135,000 educational products, which are all available at www.DVBIC.org.
- TBI Military Training Conference—An annual event designed to meet the needs of multidisciplinary military and veterans health care providers on the screening, diagnosis and treatment of TBI.
- “Traumatic Brain Injury: A Guide for Caregivers of Servicemembers and Veterans”—A kit comprised of four modules and a caregiver companion organizer to assist family caregivers of servicemembers and veterans who have sustained a moderate, severe or penetrating TBI. The guides are available in print and [online](#).
- Brainline.org—A multimedia website offering information and resources on preventing, treating and living with TBI, funded by DVBIC and produced by WETA-TV-FM.

Research

Researchers collaborate across DVBIC's multi-site network and with other organizations to better understand, assess, prevent and treat TBI. Topics include safety and prevention of TBI in deployed and non-deployed settings, effects of blast exposure on the brain, usefulness of medications and treatment interventions, TBI imaging technologies and post-TBI return to duty/work/community.

DVBIC's research projects include:

- 15-Year Longitudinal Study of TBI—Congressionally mandated research examining the long-term effects and outcomes of TBI among servicemembers who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan.
- Study of Cognitive Rehabilitation Effects for Mild TBI—Congressionally mandated randomly controlled trial to investigate the effectiveness of cognitive rehabilitation therapy for mild TBI in order to ascertain the appropriateness for coverage of this treatment under tri-service care.
- Independent Study of Automated Neurocognitive Tests—Study comparing five computerized assessment programs to see how well they evaluate cognitive

performance (e.g., memory, attention) of individuals with concussion/mild TBI.

- ProTECT III—DoD arm of National Institutes of Health study to evaluate the efficacy of intravenous progesterone treatment in acute moderate-severe TBI.

TBI Resources

DVBIC has created a [TBI fact sheet](#) to help answer basic questions on treating the condition and a [brochure](#) for servicemembers explaining the treatment of mild TBI. DVBIC also provides information sheets for those experiencing TBI, intended to be given to patients under the guidance of a medical provider:

- [Head injury and dizziness](#)
- [Headache and neck pain](#)
- [Healthy sleep](#)
- [10 ways to improve your memory](#)
- [Mood changes](#)

Provider Resources

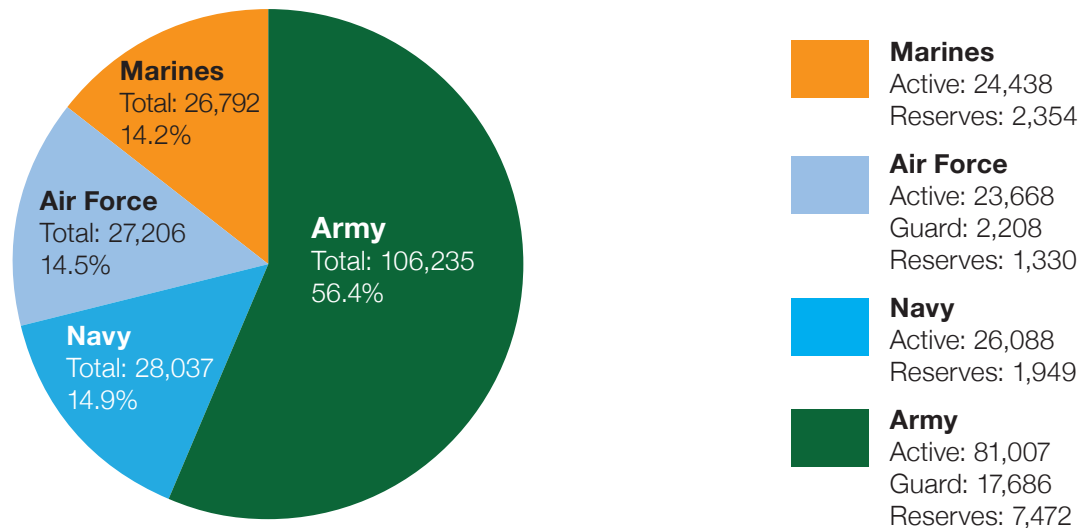
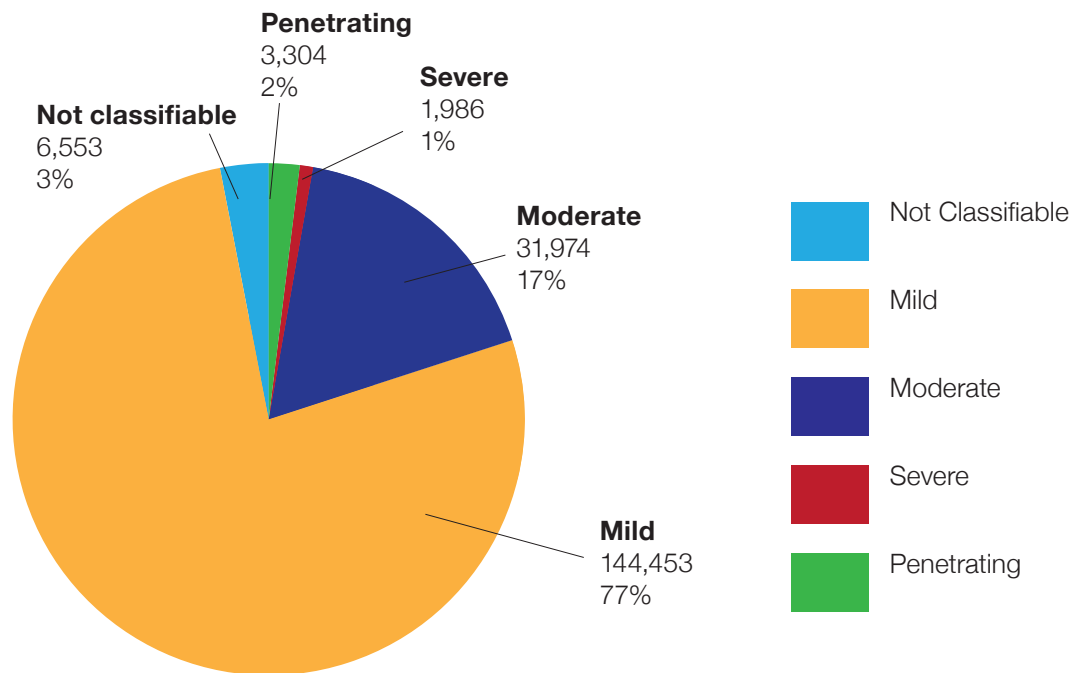
DVBIC neuroscientists and researchers have helped to establish clinical standards and guidelines to evaluate, treat and care for TBI patients. DVBIC created a [Three Question TBI Screening Tool](#) to help providers identify servicemembers who may need further evaluation for mild TBI. DVBIC's [Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Pocket Guide](#) gives primary care providers in the Continental United States an all-encompassing, quick reference guide that includes clinical guidance in assessing and treating servicemembers and veterans who have sustained a mild TBI. The center assisted in developing [VA/DoD clinical practice guidelines on the management of mild TBI](#).

DVBIC also published the following products for providers:

- [Tips for civilian health care providers on treating mild TBI and post-traumatic stress](#)—Provides tips, resources and educational information for civilian health care professionals about TBI and post-traumatic stress and how to approach military patients.
- [Clinical recommendations on driving after TBI](#)—Provides clinical recommendations to health care professionals within the Military Health System to assess the ability to drive following a TBI, regardless of severity.
- [Updated mild traumatic brain injury clinical guidance](#)—Guides providers treating patients with lingering symptoms of mild TBI.

Department of Defense Numbers for Traumatic Brain Injury 2000–2010

Total: 188,270



TBI Definitions

Concussion/mild TBI: A confused or disoriented state lasting 24 hours or less; loss of consciousness for up to 30 minutes; memory loss lasting less than 24 hours

Moderate TBI: A confused or disoriented state that lasts more than 24 hours; loss of consciousness for more than 30 minutes, but less than 24 hours; memory loss lasting greater than 24 hours but less than seven days

Severe TBI: A confused or disoriented state that lasts more than 24 hours; loss of consciousness for more than 24 hours; memory loss for seven days or more

Penetrating TBI or open head injury: The outer layer of the brain is penetrated by a foreign object